

# ESSAIES

O R,

Rather Imperfect  
Offers.

By ROBERT JOHNSON,  
Gent. *K*

*Seene and allowed.*



AT LONDON,

Printed by G. ELD, for Robert  
Wilson, and are to be sold at his shop  
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Inne, 1613.

# ESSAYS

OR

CRITICAL

QUESTIONS

BY ROBERT CRISP



21.10.1871



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ILLVSTISS.  
ET EXCELLENTISS.  
GVILIELMO  
COMITI PENBROOKE.  
BARONI HERBERTO  
DE CARDIFF, MVRML  
ONETS. QVINTIN. PAC.  
ET BELL. ARTIBVS  
ORNATISS.  
SVVS REFERT HÆG SVA  
ET D. D.

*Robertus Iohnson.*

ESSAY

1825

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## ESSAYES.

- 1 *Of Greatnes of minde.*
- 2 *Of Witte.*
- 3 *Of Education.*
- 4 *Of Exercise.*
- 5 *Of Learning.*
- 6 *Of Experience.*
- 7 *Of Histories.*
- 8 *Of Art Military.*
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- 10 *Of*

—ESSAYS—

ESSAYS

10 Of Affabilitie.

11 Of Iestes.

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14 Of Wisedome.

15 Of Reputation.

16 Of Liberality.



ESSAY. I.

OF GREATNES  
OF MIND.

**G**reatnes of mind is an ornament to vertue, setting it forth in an higher degree of excellencie, teaching vs to contemne all these imagine worldly greatneses, and confirming vs with a puissant resolution to enter vpon the brauest enterprises: where this aptnesse is wanting, the vertues which specially besit great fortunes (as depth of wisdom, height of courage and liberality) are also wanting, & it is as impossible to enlarge a little mind to any of these vertues, as with the puffed mouth to

B

force

Essay, I.

force a tall vessell against a strong and deep streame.

For how can they bee carried to embrace worthy deedes, who so highly prize this *interim* of life? how can they bee wise, who distracted with vaine feares, doe not settle in this resolution, that all worldly happines hath his being only by opinion? how can they be liberall, whose mindes confined to the world, think of living continually?

Contrariwise, where learning hath gotten such a disposition to worke vpon, it is most powerfull, and can plant an opinion against the strongest feare of death. Then a man is easily induced not to esteeme the gifts of Fortune for their specious shew (for that were to admire them), but for their vse, and that is to gouerne them. It teacheth that it is a better thing to giue then to receiue: *Illud enim est super artem, hoc uerbum est qui superatur*, the one being the enligne



## Of Greatnes of mind.

ensigne of superioritie, the other the signifying note of subiection, arguing a defect with acknowledgement of a better. And indeed great minds cannot endure to make shew of a beholdingnes. They loue their own benefits, and it is better by commemoration of former favours to draw them to accomplish our desires, then by mentioning those goodturnes, which proceeding from vs to them, might in reason binde a granting to our petitions: for by so doing they think *Destrui fortunam suam*, and interpret it to a diminution of their greatnes, and disabling them of ability to requite: and when the benefits are greater then hope of recompence, in lieu of grateful acceptance, they are repaid with a most malicious ill will: for there is no worse and more dangerous hatred, then the shame and inward guilt of an abused benefite.

With those men the most preua-

ling manner of intercession is to give  
thanks, as in Trajan's time the best  
phrase of suing for offices was to  
shew that he had bin lately endow-  
ed with one: *Optime magistratus*  
*magistratu honore hunc politar*

These mindes with a noble despid  
ignes, overpassing small matters,  
contend for an acoule of estimation,  
reserving and husbanding their  
prowesse for the greatest employ-  
ments. *Exeunt in the Post*

*salutem dandi in caligae Taurum*  
*Defligat iustitiam salutem in certamine*  
*in pascit in nimis s. or in 151913*

Nether can I more fitly compare  
them, then to these noble dogges  
which presented to Alexander by  
the king of Albania, would not stir  
at small beasts, but with an overflow-  
ing of courage concerned to in-  
counter bus with Lions and Ele-  
phants.

They are spare in speech, open in  
action, ever musing, and retired, such

## Of Greatnes of Minde.

as *Scipio* is described by *Cicero* and *Sylla* (by the most cunning searcher of mens minds) *Scipio* in whom, hee saith, there was an incredible helght of spirit in concealing his counsels. They are neither proudly conceited in prosperitie, nor discouraged with the stormes of aduersitie; no way impeachable, or subiected to the base dominion of Fortune. Such was *Furius Camillus*, who being alwaies like himself, neither by attaining the dictatorship was inflamed to haughtinesse, nor by being forbidden his country, was brooken into melancholy: and surely in this vertue the Romans were generally admirable, who neither in their conquering age were puffed vp to insolencie, nor in their cross & vnlooked for accidents stooped to dispaire. As in the disaster at *Cannæ*, (when all the world did ring out peales, that their fortunes were dead) they did nothing unworthy themselves, that might

*Essay. I.*

bee a derogation to the auntient dignitie of their name : for beeing driven to that exigent, that hauing lost the flower and strength of their Nations, they armed their seruants and aged men to the battell, yet they neuer offered any capitulations for a truce, neither would they redeeme their captiues, both which actions imported an inuincible confidence : and afterward, in the enterprise of Asia, they proposed before the victorie conditions to Antiochus, as if they had overcome, and after the conquest out of a wonderfull moderation, as if they had not vanquished.

But little mindes hauing risen with a prosperous winde, are lifted vp farre beyond the leuell of their owne discourse : Then they begin to speake in a commaunding accent, to condemne other mens actions, to affect singularity, to vsurpe vndue authorities, to controuert in argu-  
ment

### *Of Greatnes of minde.*

ment without respect, and to perseuer with an vnflexible stubbornnes, perswaded that all things become them: and thus drunken with vaine greatnesse, founded vpon no worthinesse, are easily trained into opinion, that their state was achieved by their vertue, and that their vertue was worthy of a better state. But when they begin to taste any disfaueur, presently discontenanced in themselues, they are either by seldom comfortlesse flatterers, brought to some vnreasonable purpose (as *Claudius* blinded with the false informations of *Pallas* to adopt *Nero*) or else hauing no Greatnes but outward, & standing on no true ground inwardly, are more ready to fall then calamity can depresse them, and presently like vile and able creatures, nor aduenturing to recouer, despaire of renuing, and reintegrating their fortunes.

But as the best Wine becometh

## Essay. I.

meth the egrest vinegar, and what degree of goodnes a thing holdeth, while it abiderh in his nature, the same degree of euill it taketh, when it is abused : So this Greatnesse of mind, if it be not accompanied with vertue, maketh men daungerously bad & terrible, producing the same effects, which it did in *Catiline, Immoderata, incredibilia, nimis alta semper cupiende* : but being guided by clearenesse of iudgement, causeth men to be soly earnest for the publike good, not to bee contentious, selfe-seeking, or any thing respecting their peculiar aduantages.

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## ESSAY. II.

### Of WIT.

**M**EN of slowe capacitie, are more apt to serue, then to rule, their conceite is so tough, that



## Of Wit.

that neither the rules of learning, nor precepts of wisdom, nor habite of vertue can make any impression. *Tardis mentibus virtus non committitur*, saith Cicero. They haue a dulnesse, enemy to wisdom, a slownesse hurtful to the moments of occasion, a certaine vnderstanding alway fraught with suspicion, the lesse they perceiue, the more they conceiue, (for the selfe-guiltinesse of their owne defects makes them willing to appeare curious) rather following chance, then doing any thing vpon free election: they faile in that greatnesse of minde, that noblenesse in their ends, that reason to resolue, that spirit to execute, that feeling of disgraces, which a man ought to haue.

Some in the choice of Ministers, elect men of this disposition, *contemptu magis, quam gratia*, who stand so far good, as a simple voidnesse of euill serueth them for a ground?

*Essay. 2.*

ground of fidelity : but I cannot see how to allow this opinion, since we ought to preferre those which are good, and know why they are good, when againe these simple wits are easily both altered and deceiued.

A wit too pregnant and sharpe is not good : It is like a rasor whose edge the keener it is, the sooner it is rebated, or like soft wood which is ready to receiue the impression of the Limner, but for warping is vnable to keepe, and therefore not fitte for any worthy portrature . Men of this disposition are of a more quicke then sound conceit, hauing store of thoughts rather stirred then digested, in all their actions vnstaid and fickle, one while embracing an opinion, as seeming the best, then againe looking more neerely, and not able to answere the doubtles, which are ready to enter an open inuention, fall to a strange kind of vncertainty : the more thinking, the  
more

more not knowing what to thinke,  
 very irresolute where there is some  
 probability to breede on both sides  
 coniecturall likelihoods: For a wor-  
 ling and crafty witte drawes com-  
 monly with it a doubtfull and wa-  
 uering iudgement: Such was noted  
 in *Tiberius*, stirring vp trifling re-  
 gards to containe him in suspence,  
 rather increasing new doubts, then  
 giuing any ground to settle an opi-  
 nion, being the true cause, why his  
 speech was commonly obscurely  
 doubtful, subiect to a double inter-  
 pretation, dissolued in it selfe, and  
 not knit to any constant end. Such  
 was *Clement* the seuenth, who ha-  
 uing a pregnant wit, and a deepe  
 knowledge in al the affaires of the  
 world, yet comming to points of  
 execution, was very vnfortunatly ir-  
 resolute, ready to reduce the reasons  
 into discourse, which first mooued  
 him to any desaigne.

In Negotiations they deeme that  
 of

of other mens proceeding, which in  
 their owne case they would do, and  
 in this security are oftentimes so o-  
 ver-reached by their adversary, that  
 they cannot returne without great  
 disadvantage and losse: Common-  
 lie they follow rather subtle then  
 wise counsailes, which for the most  
 part doe not speed: they are *prima*  
*specie lata*, things of apparance, and  
 no substance, rather great and mag-  
 nificent, then easie, and secure, they  
 are *Tractus dura*, and by how much  
 the subtilty is the greater, by so  
 much it is necessary, that the hand-  
 ling be very precise, or else they will  
 sort to no end, being like the clocke  
 which most artificially composed,  
 is soonest disordered, and put out of  
 frame, they are *Enimicistia*, most  
 odious to the world, & so disfau-  
 red of god, that they are alway wai-  
 ted on with most vnprosperous  
 ends. The same of craft is alway  
 hatefull, and procureth enemies, and  
 these

## Of wit

these cunning companions are of opinion that they can dispose the whole world at their pleasure, and I thinke this imperfection hath some similitude with that arrogancie of the Stoikes, which maketh men busie-headed and turbulent, desirous to be set a worke.

Againe, quicke wits are readie in speech, but affected, high-flying Poets, but seldome graue Orators, commonly breaking themselves to an humorous kinde of iesting, to play vpon any thing, and stirre the spleene, rather finding causes why a thing should be amisse, then willing to amend.

And therefore wit doth, in some respect, resemble the Sunne, which so long as his beames wander abroad according to their naturall liberty, doth gently warm the earth: but when they are by a violence vni-on assembled in the bolow of a burning glasse, consumeth that which  
ought

*Effay. 2.*

ought to bee refreshed: so Wit, the  
lampe of mans little world, indewed  
with a sensible volubility, governeth  
our actions according to our desire:  
but heeing armed with vehement  
and working spirits, becommeth the  
traitour of our blessednesse, and  
therefore grieve is said to bee the  
touchstone of the finest wit.

To close vp this discourse, I ap-  
prooue a quiet discourse of reason:  
It is ordinarily in a sanguine com-  
plexion, which is so tempered  
with a measure of melancholy, that  
the fuddaine motions and inforce-  
ments of the blood be allaid, These  
men are of a stately presence, sound  
body, long life, ready to inuent,  
firme of memory, copious to dilate,  
silent in tongue, secret of heart, de-  
terminate in aduise, regular in pro-  
ceeding, wise in seeing the best, iust  
in performing it, temperat in abstai-  
ning from the contrary. They are  
*alioquin similes*, they dispatch  
their



## *Of Education.*

their businesse with such moderation.

Such a wit wil euen in the execution perceiue, and vpon present occasion determine and take counsel, as fencers do in the listes, whom the countenance of the aduersary, the bending of his body, the moving of his hands do h admonish, how to proportion the distance, how to offend where is least ward, how to defend where is strongest assault.

### ESSAY 3.

## *Of Education.*

**E**Ducation is a good and continuall manuring of the minde, the principall foundation of all humane happinesse, and as the soule is the formall cause of our life, so this is the efficient of a good life, giuing light to the vnderstanding to know

Essay. 3.

know Good, and make difference  
from the contrary: confinement to  
the will soly to performe it, restraint  
to the growing affections, govern-  
ment in actions, ablenesse to the bo-  
dy, without which men are burdens  
& eye-fores to the common-weale,  
nothing but a number, *-Es fruges  
consumere nati.*

Honest company is like an whole-  
some aire, a man may profit much  
euen by the changeable interview  
of a good man, and he that applieth  
himselle to the conuersation of the  
wicked is subiect to the contagi-  
on of their vices: but especially it is  
a thing of great consequence, in  
yong mindes, which are pliable and  
apt to be seasoned, either with ver-  
tuous or wicked resolutions, and to  
receiue the impression of any cu-  
stomes which their first company (a  
warrant for common errors) shal by  
the silent perswasions of their pro-  
per actions impose vpon them.

This

## Of Exercise.

This is the reason why the qualities of the minde do commonly run on a blood, and become hereditary, insomuch that some families retain proper customs naturalized in them. As in *Rome* the *Pisos* were frugall: the *Merelli* religious: the *Appii* ambitious, the *Manlii* austere, the *Lelii* wise, the *Publicola* courteous, which qualities proceeded not from the difference in temperature, (for that doth vary by interchangeable marriages) but of the diuersines of breed, which I may properly call a second, and better nature.

In restraining the humors, which may feede vices in youth, it is not good to agrauate small errors with termes of affected indignation: for it is a dangerous thing to vse a medicine stronger then the nature of the disease & complexion of the patient. The best course & of most efficacy in disposing generous mindes is with reprehensions to mixe pray-

C

ses;

Essay. 3.

ses : imitating wise commaunders, who seeing their souldiers dismaied do not vpbraid them with the name of cowardice, but by recording their honorable seruices, enflame them to imitate and surpasse themselues. The forme is in the Poet : O *Achilles* where is that valour which hath filld the world with your fame: doubtles you forget your self in ouerthrowing all the excellent things you haue done, and disdaining them with so shamefull a retirednes. Thus hauing awaked him out of his sleep of idlenes, he telleth him, *Tibi se peritura reseruant Pergama*, and so maketh demonstration how he may honorably redeem the already conceived infamies. For as euil eies although they can see there is a Sunne, yet through weaknes cannot delight in the Sun : so a minde ouer-weighed with the violence of passions, hardly admitteth that freenesse of speech, which reason might warrant, but requireth  
such

## *Of Education.*

Such a Phyficion, who can let blood in the right vein, & then again bind vp the wound. Such corrections are smoothly couered with an vnexpected praife: and the memory of their former vertues toucheth the minde with a noble and feeling shame of the present faule.

Againe, it is better to entreat by perfwasions, then enforce by commandements: for feare and seruile restraint (the instruments of compulfion) exasperat free fpirits, making them, who would bee overweighed with the sweet violence of reasonable wordes, to caft away shame and perfeuer in faules. Euery man desireth to haue this commendation added to his actions, that they are naturall, and not affected either for feare of punifhment, or hope of reward. He gouerneth better, who suffereth men to be good, then hee that maketh men good: but aboue all I approoue that moderation in

*Essay 4.*

parents, which shall seeme rather to  
have found then rendred their chil-  
dren dutifull.

Fathers must loue their children  
with that affection that they ought:  
but let them perceiue as little as the  
gentlenes of their nature wil beare,  
neither too lauishly giuing them the  
reines, nor too carefully grieuing  
them for want of well ruled libertie.  
And althogh the best rules be to in-  
ure them to labor, to acquaint them  
with simple dyet, so that by custome  
all miserable actions may be natural:  
yet if there be not a moderation v-  
sed, young minds will be presently  
discountenanced, and great spirits  
embased with no small empairment  
of their worth: for little mindes,  
though neuer so full of vertue, can  
be but little vertuous.



## ESSAY. 4.

### *Of Exercise.*

**T**He exercise ought to be such, which may occupy every part of the body, as the play at the ball, neuer sufficiently commended by *Gallen*: or hunting, by which men are accustomed to contraries, to heates, to coldes, to watchings, to fastings, to water, to beere, to wine.

To cōmend hunting I need not, onely I will say, that it maketh men laborious, labour begetteth good customes, good customes are the roots of good lawes, lawes founded vpon such grounds, the producers of military prowes, and that where these three concur in any degree of excellency, they cannot but make a strong and puissant common-weale. But aboue all other recreations it cōfirmeth the body in ability both of doing

Essay. 4.

and suffering, and acquainteth the minde by degrees with danger: so that I may say as *Cicero* did of fencing: that it is *Fortissima aduersus mortem, & dolorem disciplina*: For in that it resembleth peril, it maketh vs familiar with peril (custome diminishing the terrour of those things, which by nature are indeed feareful) and so by little & little resoluerh vs against any dauntings, which the imminency of daunger might drawe with it. So *Marius* before he would bring out his souldiers to fight with the *Cimbres*, set them vpon the trenches to acquaint themselves with the terrible aspect, and immane bodies of those Sauages: and by this counsell brought to pass, that now they began to contema those which at the first sight they amasedly feared. - *His artibus futuri duces imbuuntur*, sayth *Plinie*: for by these sports, images of battailes were deliuered to the memory, which afterward

## Of Exercise.

werde abler iudgement might dis-  
pence: wherupon the ancient Wor-  
thies, and *Herods*, which ranged the  
whole world to their obeysance, are  
reported to haue been bred in the  
woods, and imployed in continuall  
huntings: by which they did not on-  
ly strengthen their bodies, resolute  
their minds, but also being ridden in  
all grounds, became good discou-  
ers (a quality very mainly required  
in a conductor) for a man hauing  
perfectly beaten one place, may soo-  
ner attaine to know the scituation of  
another, because all regions do som-  
what resemble one another in pro-  
portion, and so by comparing one  
known, a man may cōpendiously in-  
form himselfe of many vnknowne.

## ESSAY. V.

### Of Learning.

**A**lthough Learning haue a pri-  
uate and pleasing end in it self,

Essay. 5.

as being the harbour where the free and vntroubled consideration hath a delightfull repose from the sea of more vnquiet thoughts, yet it is but a seruing quality, preparing the mind to a nobler end of wel doing, which (as the proud incōstant Stoikes held) doth not consist in refraining or ceasing, but in working & performing, and it is not a defect, or not doing of things, but an effect or doing of things.

For knowledge teacheth not her owne vse, but as a necessary meane inableth vs for good actions, and it ought to be measured by vertue, and if loued for any thing, it must be, because it informeth to do vertuously. It is an excellent cōmendation, that *Plinie* attributeth to *Traian*: *Præstas quæcunq; præcipiunt tantumq; eas* (litteras) *diligis, quantum ab illis probaris*: we must vse the precepts of learning as the Laws of our behavior accounting of them in no other proportion then

## Of Learning.

then as the waiting Ministers, by whose mediatio a more easie access is prepared to wisdom: wee must remember, that the glory and increase of knowledge consists in the exercising goodnesse: that these maiden muses do not answer the hope of men, except they be ioyned to that masculine and aduante power of the mind, which maketh vs perform good things and great things.

So when *Rome* was in her flourishing age, and began to terrifie all Countries with the fame of her expected greatnesse, even at that time, *genium nemo sine corpore exercebat*, there was none who freed his mind to take repast on these so diuine sciences, but hee remembered that he had a body with fit organs to inure their behests, and that hee should be a forgetful receiuer of his countries benefits, except he in some sort made recopence by imploying his powers for her aduancement & good.

Too

*Essay. 5.*

Too much to retire to these studies, doth not accord with state or gravity: but by separating a man from more worthy deuoirs, bringeth him into contempt: It is an happy thing to keepe a mean of wisdom, least while we think too much of doing, we leaue vndone the effect of thinking: but especially we must eschew with too vehement seruency to embrace this glorious profession, and record that saying of *Cato*, That active mindes cannot be with a more honest idlenes, then the study of letters corrupted, nor idlenesse by any greater or more dangerous policy find easie entertainment in a wel gouerned Common-weale.

Some obiekt, that howsoeuer this refiner of inuention ( Learning ) is commendable in lower fortunes, yet in great men it is an occasion of more intollerable vices: that it rayseth their thoughts into vaine regions of ambition, and to the accomplish-



## *Of Learning.*

plishmēt of things not Feasible, that it ouer-mastereth their reason with the sweet insinuation of hauty matters, directing them to worke their priuate ambitions with the publike inconuenience. To this I answer, that the argument is taken onely from the abuse, and therefore of no validity, because al reasons either of praise or dispraise ought to be taken from the right vse, to which a thing is directed. Morcouer, I thinke, that their conceit is inuegled with the same fury, which possessing some such goodlesse mindes, hath taught them to inueigh against the vnspeakable wisdom of the Creator, for this reason only, because hee had endewed them with reason. For (say they) as Wine because it doth se'dom help, but often distemper the sick, is better detained, least through a soothing hope of doubtful health, a certaine danger bee incurred: so (this swift mouing of the minde) reason is  
better

Essay. 5.

better denied to creatures, because more abuse it to naughtinesse, then rightly vse it in vertuous enterprises.

And a little to vrge on this so strange position, Is there any wrong glozed, & right eluded, any discord sowed, any machination, or guile laied to entrap the wel meaning of honest men, but reason worketh it euen with a more refined sharpnesse of inuention? *Ingeniosior enim est ad excogitandū simulatio veritate, seruitus libertate, metus amore.* In the tragedies wee may see *Medea*, with what cunning & quaint discourse of reason, what subtile preparatiō she seeketh to cōpasse her designs while laying this grādhold of proceeding.

*Fruētus est scelerum tibi nullum scelus putaro.*

She worketh by congratulating her enemies with gifts, knowing that to bee a course, where wary distrust might make no preuention of her malice. Nay, to leaue fables, and come

## Of Experience.

come to the life of truth, history: had not *Nero* great reason to supplant al those, whose liberty of minde hee could not endure, as a thing hurtful to his seat of tyranny. His reason told him, that absolute power was giuen him from the gods, that hee only as Lord could giue Fortune to the world, and distribute haps and mishaps at his pleasure: that it was an vntimely policy to preserue those men, who standing strong in their own vertue & loue of the people might heaue him out of that abominable iniustice and vsurpation.

But these reasons are but colours, to keep our iudgemēt from entring into consideration of the true cause, which in these smiling raiiers stirs vp an ingrateful scorn against literature: And I think their hatred proceedeth either frō *Domitians* reasō, who priuy to himself of most horrible vices, exiled these arts: *Ne quid vsquam honesti oculis occurreret*: or  
from

*Essay.* 5.

from reuerence, as to a minde guilty there is nothing more terrible then the sight of that which might pluck into the remembrance the omitting of doing worthily. Even so, if vertue were beheld in bodily organs, vndoubtedly she would not, as some Philosophers haue taught, stir vp the degenerate minds to embrace her effects, but rather worke a desire neuer to come to look vpon her: for as men did see, so they would againe be seene by her, and the sight would rub into their mindes, and vrge their consciences with deserued infamy: and vice in such comparison would seeme fuller of deformity, and then men so hardly aggriued, would forsake both feare and shame (the only meanes to withdraw euil men from wicked courses) and put on such a proud contempt, as should take a brauery and felicity in naughtinesse.

*Essay.*

## ESSAY. 6.

### Of Experience.

**E**Xperience is the guide of the understanding, the rule of will, the over-ruler of opinion, the soule, and most entire part of wisdom, without which euen the most absolute Schollers cannot attaine to any degree of perfection in ciuil actions. There is more certainty in the principles of practise, then in the most necessary demonstrations, or cleereſt discourses of reason: and these men that are intendants, and practised in the occurrences of Courts are fitter for any active employment, and can with better easinesse dispatch any businesses: *Quoniam enim habent oculum ab ipsa experientia, vident ipsum principium.* These are as it were trusty Oracles, on whose

Essay. 5.

whose iudgement a man may safely repose his whole fortunes: they are vpon earth, *instar presciorum numinum*, whose aduise a man ought to take, before he ingage himself in any action.

For the meane, by which wisdom enableth vs to foresee the successe, and accordingly after due consideration rule the presēt, is coniecture, which by comparing things passed, presupposeth, out of the same causes, the same effects: now in this obscure & incertaine deliberation vpon the future, a man experienced is like him who hauing tried a dangerous passage in his own person, & noted the by-turnings which might diuert him into an error, can in the darkest night with a secure and forward alacrity, go the same way, and ouer-comming all the difficulties, arrive at the appointed place, whereas another, though furnished with the soundest directions ( yet neuer ha-  
uing



## *Of Histories.*

uing proued it quaketh at every shadow) and hauing his spirits shut vp in amazement, plainly hazardeth his person.

The rules to perfect experience are, to frequent the courts of Iustice, as Free-schools of ciuill learning, to endeauiour to vnderstand all occutences, to confer concerning the news of the world with men expert, real, of a deepe insight, such as are not carried away with apparāces but can spy day light at a litle hole, and make iudgement out of matters themselves, and discerne betweene truth and truth likenesse, and know when euert designs ate the foyles of more eminent intentions.

### ESSAY 7.

## *Of Histories.*

**H**istory is the mixture of profit and delight, the seasoning  
D of

Essay. 7.

of more serious studies, the reporter  
of cases adiudged by euent, the in-  
terlude of our haps, the image of our  
present fortune, the compendiary di-  
rector of our affaires, by which valor  
is quickned, iudgement ripened, &  
resolution entertained.

Heere are the reasons, why  
some estates liue quietly, others  
turmoiled in continuall distur-  
bances, some flourish by the de-  
lights of peace, others by continu-  
ing war: some spend lauishly with-  
out profit, others sparingly with ho-  
nour. Here we may see ruines with-  
out feare, dangerous wars wi hout  
peril, the customs of al nations with-  
out expence. By this obseruation of  
noting causes and effects, counsels  
and successes, likenesse betweene na-  
ture and nature, action and action,  
fortune and fortune, is obtained that  
wisdome, which teacheth vs to de-  
liberate with ripenesse of iudgemēt,  
to perseuer in things deliberated, to

exc-

## Of Histories.

execute with readinesse, to temporise with inconueniences, to abide aduersity, to moderate prosperity, to know the Scriptures, but in such sort, that neither superstition make vs vainly fearefull, nor neglect cause vs to bee contemptuously presuming. And by opening to vs the plots, which gaue life to all the actions, it teacheth more then 20. men liuing, successfull, can learne by practise, as the General by seeing the counsels, which gouern the euent, must necessarily profit more then the souldier, who not able to search into the causes, perceiueth only the naked euent.

But as Histories are diuerse, so their operatiō in benefiting the perusers are diuers. In some as it were in *Cleantes* table, vertue is set out in her best ornaments, as in the describing of famous battailes, where specious wars, the ruin of natiōs, the situatiō of countreies, the vncertain traueses of fortune, the death of braue

*Essay. 7.*

Commanders, haue a certaine kinde of Maiefty linked with delight, and the mind by conuersing in the is not onely delighted, but also lifted vp with spirit of better resolution, and raysed to think of imitating: These fill a mā with better courage, but fail in inabling him for the manage of ciuil actions. Another kind there is like labyrinths, relating cunning & deceitful friendships, how rage is suppressed with silence, treason disguised in innocence, how the wealthy haue bin proscribed for their riches, & the worthy vndermined for their vertue. These prouoke vs to eschew their vility & lack of vertue, & to be rather vicelesse then greatly vertuous: and although they bee distasted by those who measure History by delight, yet they are of most vse in instructing the minde to the like accidents. And sithens men prostituting their wits to all hopeful ends of gaine, are ready to aduen-

## *Of Histories.*

aduenture themselves in the like actions, they are the most necessary things that can bee warned vs, to the intent that in the like practises, we may seeke meanes of prevention and frustrate al the attempts of such subtle euil companions.

In this ranke I prefer *Tacitus* as the best that any man can dwel vpon: Hee sheweth the miseries of a torne and declining state, where it was a capital crime to bee vertuous, and nothing so vn safe as to bee securely innocent: where great mens gestures were particularly interpreted, their actions aggravated, & construed to proceed from an aspiring intent: & the Prince too suspiciously iealous touching points of concurrency, suppressed men of great desert, as competitors with the in that chiefest ground, the loue of the people: When Princes rather delighted in the vices of their subiects, either because euery man is pleased with

*Essay. 7.*

his owne disposition in another, or because by a secret of long vse, they thought those would most patiently endure seruitude, whose contemptible manners and vilety, might excuse their base subiection. He sheweth how enformers, men of desperate ambition, sharpe-sighted in spying faults, and cunning in amplifying occasions of dislike, forswear all honesty, redeeming the security of their owne persons with the losse of good name, and liuing on the vices of men, Scarabs on Vlcerous sores: How vaine men were preferred to be treasurers, that they might fall with their proper vanities and want of gouernment, being vsed like sponges, which after they had bin wet with the spoiles and extor-tions, were crushed and condemned that their long-gathered-wealth might returne to the Princes coffers.

Heere some inferre, that the knowledge of euill doth induce and draw



## Of Histories.

draw men to effect, that the imitation of an euil doth alway excell the president in height of mischiefe, but the following of vertue doth scarce equalize the example in any degree of goodnesse, that the conuersing in *Tacitus* doth deter men from doing worthily: where are *Canis*, *Seneca*, *Sarani*, *Aruntii*, men of admirable vertues in so corrupt a gouernment, ouerliuing their prosperity and dying like Traitors in the same age, when *Seianus*, an impudent informer, strangely compounded of the two contrarieties of pride & flattery, in shew modest, and therefore more dangerously aspiring, sweieth the fortunes of men at his pleasure, & by lucky passing through mischieuous deuises, is grown *Ferox sceleris*, & emboldned in his treacheries. But yet, these men ought to remember that those mischiefes are but mischiefes to a baser mind, *quęcunque forte videris, miserū neges*: that although they were oppressed, yet

*Essay. 7.*

they remained still superiors, gouernours of necessity, rather directing then obeying the vexations. And I will not deny, but such corrupt mindes may also suck venome out of the most wholesome flowers, and armed with some dangerous Positi-  
ons out of the treasure of Bookes, may like poison, mingled with y best Wine, more forcibly hurt by tray-  
ning on their mischieuous purposes more cunningly: But yet me thinks, men haue great incitements to hold  
thēselues vp in vertue, by seeing euil men so contemptuously set forth, qua-  
king with the inner vpbradings of conscience, not entertaining sleepe, but disquieted with a continual tor-  
menting execution: we may learn also to praise God for our gracious soue-  
raign, vnder whose peaceful raigne, we are secured from al those miseries and enioy all those benefits, whose  
worth we shal know, when we suf-  
fer priuation of them, vnder whom  
our

## Of Histories.

our subiection is to the law, our service obseruation, our obedience a care not to offend.

In *Tacitus* are three notes, which are required in a perfect Historie; first, truth in sincerely relating without hauing any thing, *Hausum ex vano*; secondly explanation in discovering not only the sequel of things but also the causes & reasons: thirdly iudgement in distinguishing things by approuing the best, and disallowing the contrary, but yet he performeth this with such an art, hiding art as if he were *alind agens*, by enterlacing the *Series* of the tale, with some iudicial, but strangely briefe sentences. In making vse of this Historie knowledge, we must not ascertaine to our selues the sequel of any thing to fall out iust according to the like case in the history, but determin of it as a thing apt to chance otherwise: for an example only enforms a likelihood, and if we gouern our counsels

*Essay. 7.*

sels by it, there must be a cōcurrence of the same reasons, not only in generall, but also in particularities.

In making iudgement of Hystory, and considerately applying it to our present interests, wee must specially regard the dispositiōs of the agents, and diligently re-mark how they are affected in minde, which is the least deceiuing ground of forming opinion: for without this pondering, and knowledge of the qualities of those Nations, which wee meet with in reading, a man is vnable to make any due comparison betweene the present particular, and the former example. But to leaue these disputations, and the causes of variety in Customs to the Schooles, as a matter some will not grant, and fewer vnderstand, I will onely giue some instances of the proper qualities of some countries, which most familiarly occur in reading. The ancient Romans were men of an inuincible spirit,

## *Of Histories.*

spirit, not dismaied with what frowning disasters soeuer fortune could suppress their courage: and hauing a mind superior to all aduersitie, resembled *Anteus* in the Poet, who so oftē as he was thrown to the ground, receiued fresh strength, but being lifted vp, was soone tamed by his aduersary: so they in their declining state, promising beter of their hopes armed vp their valor, and were filled with a greater brauery of mind, but comming to the height of felicitie, and flowing with the spoiles of the whol world, ouer-swaied with their owne grandeur, began to quail in the last act, and after a safe escape from the maine sea of sorraine incumbrances, to suffer shipwracke in the hauen: then ouer many good fortunes bred in them a proud retchlesnes, then through the disuse of arms all things fell into the relapse, & priuate dissentiōs were kindled to ruine themselves, then the city which was

WONT

Essay. 7.

wont to give law to the whole world began to be *facunda inimici*, fruitfull in prouoking partialities, desirous of civil tumults, crafty in espying & aggravating secret dislikes, ready to catch at any occasion of innouation. Their valour made them quiet, & quiet wealthy: but according to the reuolution of all things with a swift & violent return their wealth effeminated their valor with idlenes, idlenes occasioned disorder, disorder made ruine. And as the iron begets rust which consumeth it, and ripe fruits produce wormes which eat it so their greatnes nourished such vices as by little & little brought thē to confusion, insomuch that a great time their state was maintained more by reputation of thinges done, then any other present foundation.

The French are too aduenturous in the iminency and nearenes of terror with a too furious resolution  
in



## *Of Histories.*

in assault more then men, in main-  
taining the medley lesse then wo-  
men, very irregular in their actions,  
grounding the vpon fallible hopes  
& vain expectations, light, incon-  
stant, insolent in prosperity, desti-  
ned rather to conquer then keepe:  
as contrarily the Venetians haue  
recovered by the arts of peace and  
composition, that which they haue  
forgone by war.

The Spaniards are subtile, wrap-  
ping their drifts in close secrecie, ex-  
pressing surety in their words, but  
keeping their intentions dissembled  
vnder disguised assurance of amity,  
betraying the innocency of their  
friends, in malice infinit, and so o-  
uer-caried with that passion, that  
for the most part they execute a re-  
uenge far aboue the nature of the  
offence: not giuing any sodaine  
apparance of it, but waiting for op-  
portunity, so much redouble the  
blowe, by how much it hath been  
nou,

*Essay. 8.*

nourished with tract of time, and  
hung in suspense.

ESSAY 8.

*Of Art Militarie.*

**T**Here is a barbarous opinion  
of the contrarietie of armes  
and learning, and the im-  
possibility of their meeting in  
any person : which vnreasonable  
Paradox well fitteth those who  
knowe nothing but the furie of  
strength, and not the vertue of cou-  
rage. For without this fortitude is  
intituled to those actiōs which hold  
rather of vice, and the more it seeks  
to hurt, the lesse it is able to hurt,  
and is either a rashnesse which after  
the first brunt dieth in it selfe, *Et ut*  
*quadam animalia, amisso aculeo tor-*  
*pet,* and cannot hurt, like som beasts  
which shoot the sting, and partake  
no more with the poison, or a false  
vigor

## Of Art Militarie.

vigor proceeding from despair, whē men weary of the worlds eies, shall thrust them-selues into manifest perill, without any sufficient ground of reason: or a fiercenesse, when choller and the effects of anger are made the motiues of valour, or a confidence, when a man after the often aspect of danger, and by the luckypassing of diuers fights is become hazardous, and enterprising in such sort, as the vice of drinking, *In pralia tradit inermē*. Without learning *Hercules* is furious, *Darius* insolent, *Achilles* ouercome with vaine delights, vnable to cōmand his own decent appetites, and ready to haue ingloriously seperated himself from reuealing his vertue, if wise *Ulysses* had not by a timely policy drawne him to retire into himself, and consider the frayle foundations of those weaknesses, which did so infect his resolution.

But although learning be of great  
con-

*Essay. 8.*

consequence in perfection of a martial man, yet experience is the chiefest point, neither can a man be absolute by reading other mens exploits. The true Schoole of Warre, is the field, and not the Chamber: the teacher is vse, and the best course for attaining is to be present in the important deliberations, to obserue and ponder vpon the executions, to consider the euents and the counsels which gouerned them, from which obseruation ariseth that wisdom, which inableth ys to make choice of our aduantages, to aduance opportunities, to cut off by celeritie all discourse of counsel from the enemy, to make his inuentions sort to his proper ruine, to overcome by quicknes the difficulty of those things which could not bee suppressed by expecting, to accommodate prouisoes to all chances, to alter our determinations according to the sodainnes and variety of occurrences, neither to feare

## Of Art Militarie.

fear not despise the enemy, but to remember, *Vt semper pendeat hamus*, to bee ready to catch at that period of time, occasion, which by a fortunate meeting of circumstances doth ease vs in the cōpassing our proiects.

Great men ought to frequent the war, proposing to themselves these three reasons which moued *Tyberius* to addresse *Drusus* into *Illyricum*: the first was, *suescere militia*, to inure and experience him in warfare: for it is not sufficient to haue military science in our minde, but by often meditations to make it familiar to our hand and feet. He is the best souldier that is most experimented, neither can I more fiely compare these book-knights than to a Musician, who insitting only vpon the Theorick, is not able to expresse any thing.

The second was, *Studia exercitus parare*, to wind himself into the fauor of the Souldiers: which thing, of what consequence it is in raising and

E

pre-

## Essay. 8.

preferring a man, wee may see in *Hanibal*, who being wholly a martial man, borne and nourished in his Fathers pavillion and sight of the souldiers, was before the prime of his youth chosen generall through their consent and applause : neither was there any other apparant cause of the obtaining that dignity at so vnripe yeares, but the affection of the Army ; which alway desireth such a Leader, whose maners they are most familiarly acquainted with.

The chiefe rules to get this fame and reputation are these, to haue a watchfull eye, a diligent hand, a resolute heart, at the beginning to doe rather too much then too little, sometime to hazard fairely, to watch and ward, to glory in being content with a little, not to bee more costly apparelled, then a private souldier *Arma et equi conspiciantur* : in action to bee heedefully earnest, to refuse no employment for feare, nor enter  
into



## Of Art Military.

into any vpon an humour of ostentation, to suppress the esteeme of your atchieuements, and vnder valuing them humbly like a Minister, referre the honour to the fortune of the Generall. For such modesty augmenteth the same of vertue, beeing indeede like those shadowes which cunning painters vse to encrease the lustre and grace of their portraytures: and men seeing such respectlesse account made of such things done, will pre-occupie conceits of some noble future successes; *Jugurthes* art in inworthying him-selfe was, *Plurimum facere, & nihil de scipio loqui*, and so he conquered enuie, and the passion of emulation with an infinite glory.

The third reason was, *Simul Iuuenem urbano luxu lasciuientē melius in castris haberi reuocauit Tiberius*; therefore the Camp must not be frequented as a secure and priuiledged place of licentiousnesse, but as a Schoole

*Essay. 9.*

where the body ought to be inured,  
and by continuall labor subiected to  
the miseries of travell, thereby not  
to be daunted in the imminencie of  
danger, nor to feare a wound, but  
with an invincible vigor to endure  
all corporall aduersities.

ESSAY. 9.

*Of Travell.*

**T**ravell entertayneth a man  
with delight, neither is there  
any so confirmed in a con-  
tempt of all worldly things,  
who findeth not himselfe out of a  
meere instinct of nature infinitely  
pleased with the stately representa-  
tion and maiestie of strange and fa-  
mous cities. But what an inward ob-  
iectatiō it is to see the ruines of The-  
aters, of triumphal Arcusses, to view  
the places which doe yet testifie the  
vertues of the auncient Worthies :

*Et*

## Of Travell.

*Es campos ubi Troia fuit,*  
They know best, whose minds soare  
higher, and become greater by be-  
holding the memorials of other  
mens glory and magnificence.

But because reason biddeth vs to  
provide rather for the beautifying of  
our nobler part the minde, then for  
the flattering of sence, the chiefe  
scope must be abilitie, and the grea-  
test delight to feele with *Solon*: *Se-  
nescere se multa indies addiscentem.*  
For, although these studies require  
rather retirednes & immunity from  
those disquiets, which this (vnsetled  
kind of life) traueilling doth drawe  
with it: yet let vs know, that to this  
ornament of knowledge concur not  
only the sence or seeing, to conuerse  
in the monuments and treasure of  
books: but also of hearing, in confer-  
ring with men excellent in euery  
profession: in enelowshipping with  
diuers natures and dispositions. For  
this variety of company bettereth

Essay. 9.

behaviour subtelizeth arts, awaketh and exerciseth wit, ripeneth iudgement, confirmeth wisdom, and enricheth the mind with many worthy and profitable observations: performing al these by so secret a working and insensible alteration, that a man doth sooner acknowledge himselfe much abler, then hee can apprehend the means: Euen as in the growing of a tree wee perceiue not the successiue motion of increase, but at length may sufficiently assure our selues, that there hath been an augmentation. In this obseruation, as there are many general things, with which a man may trust himselfe; so there are many particularities which are more specially to be obserued, as most powerfull to inspire vs with ciuill wisdom, and inable our iudgement for any actiue employment, *vid.* the religion, lawes, forme of government, situation, castles, fortifications, cities, forces: what neigh-

## *Of Travell.*

neighbours confine, of what power, how inclined : The noble Families, their descents, intermarriages, their potency, either immediate of themselves, or by reason of the Kings countenance, their adherences, sects, dependencies, partialities, and the causes of all.

But because in forraine countries there are many peculiar vices covered with the specious semblance of humanity, which have borne long sway, & growing into custome, unworthily find not onely pardon, but also commendation : and our weakesse is prone to participate those euill habites, which eyther flatter it with noueltie, or deceiue it with a glorious shew of vertue, therefore a man, ready to enter such expediti-  
ons, must obserue these rules, as the chiefeest preservations of reason against any such infection; so much the more dangerous, when the contagion inueagleth and entrencheth

*Essay. 9.*

in the ayrie of a preuerse approbation.

For assuring our selues that where are many vices, there are also infinite vertues ( because no euill is so bad, as that which proceedes from the corrupt seeds of goodnes ) wee must in such places affect the familiaritie of the best, by all conuenient obseruances, endearing them who as they praeceed in all worthe qualities, so especially in this vertue of easinesse and humanitie. And although many dangerous minds are hidden vnder the false glass and deceivable apparances of feined meeknesse (a vertue rather taken on then taken into them) yet the best rule is (if there be no other manifest cause of prohibition ) to apply to their conuersation, who are most excellent in the formes of behauiour: For thereby men are bettered in a certaine externall vertue of ciuility and gentlenesse: which if it flowe kindly,



## Of Travell.

ly, naturall without forcing against the Hare, & voide of the two imperfections affecting, and ostentation, vndoubtedly cannot but worthily commend a man, and make demonstration of a minde answerable.

In meeting with natures close & retired, spare in revealing themselves, conformed to al turnings of flights, skilful in dissembling passions, such as can pretex spite with a countenance of amity, it is good (if they be innocent and harmelesse) to vse semblings, as opportune defence to frustrate their proiects, but not as machinations inuented for mischieuing. Therefore the countenance (the gate of the mind) must be open and free to al, the tongue sparing in vtterance of things of importance, the minde closed, and this remembred. *Chi vuol andar per passe, dene hauere bocca di porcello, L'orechie d' asinello.*

## ESSAY. 10.

### *Of Affabilitie.*

**A**ffability is like Musick, which is made by a iudiciall correspondence of a sharpe & flat, it is a mixture of pleasingnes and seuerity, in such sort, that neither gentlenes, by being a derogation, weakens reuerence, nor seuerity loue. It is not sufficient to bee altogether reall in performing the effects of a louing mind: but also euery man requireth to be assured by viter apparances, as messengers of the inward intétions. And if by these oblations a man giue not his friend confidence and surety, I may not vnfitly compare his beneuolence to an Image, which in it selfe well proportioned, but not apparrelled in apt colors, doth want that delightfull lustre, which should satisfie the greedy eyes of the spectators.

## Of Trauells

A man must bee not onely present in ministring anie conuenient Office, but also by sending forth in the countenance the pawnes and assurance of loue, by exciting men to open and reueale their businesses, & by promising all conuenient furtherance. For as men warme in the youthfull desires of loue, take greatest comfort by being seene of their Mistressse, and receiue more ioy from a wanton looke, then from any other sence: so among all the kind Offices of friendship, there is none so desired, as this acknowledgement by outward respects, especially when the end is meer saluation: for there is no more contrary enemy to true friendship, then the motion of proper interest. The Romans not to defraud any man of a due & conuenient Congie, retained Admonitors, (called *Nomenclatores*) who should suggest the name, and qualitie, and account of euery one they encountred, that

*Essay. 10.*

that they might be saluted in a conformable stile: for to looke strange and disdainful, to bee backward in returning these respects, procureth hatred even in the dearest friends, so much more dangerous, by how much men can lesse endure to be despised then iniured, because other grievances concerne only the body, and bring this comfort, that hee is some body in his conceit, that so offended him: but the iniuries of contempt are a disreputation, and the offended taketh himselfe to bee accounted no body, and therefore such omissions can hardly by any meanes be redeemed.

*Cesar* through his wonderful vertues had settled himself in the strong loue of the people, and with his easinesse and affability, (as with sugar sprinckled vpon a bitter medicine) had mittigated the griefe, which a Romane spirit might take from the pretious remembrance of lost liberty:

## *Of Affability.*

ty: while by seeming to arrogate nothing, he obtained that all affaires of consequence should remaine at his deuotion: yet one vncircumspection in not receiuing the Senate with due reuerence, cancelled all memory of former deserts, gaue his enemies honest colour to beare him il will, and authorized an opinion, that his death was meritorious & lawful.

The seasoning of these oblations and ceremonies, is a readinesse to pleasure, deuotion, faith, sincerity, which wee ought to addresse according to the present opportunity. In these apparances, equals must be esteemed superiours, and no circumstance must bee omitted, either of meeting, or of accompanying, or of salutation: for these outward forms, are obserued as demonstrations of the inward affection: inferiours must bee receiued with manifestation of an hopefull willingnesse to see them comperes, by acknowledging their  
merit

Essay. Ic.

merit and worthinesse: but if they be of equal ranke (as followers of some great state) a man must stand indifferent to al: otherwise some will bee discontent, & think him moued with passions: others insolent, when they know that he is necessited to depēd on the, howsoeuer they entreat him.

If any shal importune an vnwonted request, the repulse must be modest by shewing the quality of the matter to be intractable, by redring some sufficient excuse ( which may arise from the circumstances of time and place, or other infinit accidents) by reuealing a desire, to open in a more fit time those effects which enuious occasion wil not now permit. Thus Denials wil bee interpreted as special fauours, and men filled with a certaine hopeful reuiuing of mind, will be contented with promise. *Sic homines fronte & oratione magis, quam ipso beneficio, reque capiuntur.*

The way to attaine acceptable beha-



## *Of Affability.*

behaviours, is not a point of endeavour, (for then it is feigned, and it alway chanceth that feigned courtesie turneth to pride) but rather consisteth in a certaine induction and readinesse of the mind, which if it be excellent, will easily sute it selfe in these Formes: for (as it was said by one, whom to name were presumption) behaviour is but a garment, & it is easie to make a comely garment for a body in it selfe well proportioned, whereas a deformed body can neuer bee so helped by Tailors art, but the counterfeiting wil appeare. Obseruation also is a good meane, but a carelesnesse in expressing doth adde a singular grace, as one motion in dauncing kindly proceeding, performed recklessly, cunningly implyeth, that a man can doe better then he can. If there bee any art vsed, it must bee in hiding art, otherwise it wil hold either of affected selfe-conceite, or of tedious ostentation.

Againe,

## *Of Affability.*

Againe, it is not sufficient to pro-  
voke men to disclose their interests,  
by giving ready audience and easie  
accesse: but also a man must patient-  
ly attend their suites, the behaviour  
beeing such, as may shew all our  
powers occupied in consideration  
of the, but by contradicting or fore-  
conceiuing of the conclusion, to  
breake off their conceits, is a con-  
tempt, which toucheth the mind, &  
cannot bee redeemed with neuer so  
great good pleasures.

To deny a sute, doth dismisse men  
discontented, therefore in some ca-  
ses it is better to promise, although  
there appeare no conueniency for  
the effectuating: for howsoeuer the  
present affaire bee disappointed, yet  
men are more pleased with him,  
whom they see hindered in dispatch  
of weightier occurrences, then they  
would bee, if they receiued a flat de-  
niall. This rule, although it cannot  
stand with the strict precepts and  
square


## Of Iests.

square of honesty, yet it is a speciall poynt of this quallity, (which I may cal with Cicero. *Artificium beneuolentie colligenda*) which is either a vertue, or cannot stand without vertue.

Also benefits must seeme to bee receiued rather of courtesie, then of deseruing: and (amplifications drawne from the circumstances) it is good highly to esteeme them, as matters of great moment, and very necessary, and employed in time: for men loue to bee accounted profitable, and to haue their seruices acknowledged.

## ESSAY. II.

### Of Iestes.

 Tis a poynt of Affability to interlarde our Discourses with some sayings which may come from a readines of Wit, and to place

F

Mercury

Essay. II.

*Mercury* (as it were) in the midst of the graces. A continued grave speech doth hold of tediousnes: To abuse Iestes too often, doth diminish the reputation of the businesse, & impairerth gravity: but as a little water doth not quench the fire, but is vsed to inflame it: so these witty sayings, serving oportunitie, & sparingly scattered in our speech, are acceptable in re-enforcing of it, and causing a stronger apprehension. They are the seasoning, and must not want that matter & iudgement which ought to be seasoned: otherwise in stead of giving a delicat tast, they become tediously troublesome: Herein let vs imitate wise painters, who chiefly propose to counterfeite the miniature lesse intentive to the vnder ornaments as things apt to be varied, as shall best serue for the setting forth the principal: so the mind must be accommodated to the present busines, & iestes (the apparrelling of  
our

## Of Iestes

our speech) used as Parentheses,  
which are to be witty, and not mar  
the sence. And as skillful Architects  
so dispose the windowes in a stately  
edifice, that neither the multitude  
weaken the house, nor the want bee  
a deficient cause of darknesse: so a  
man must prouid that neither the of-  
ten vse of Iestes cause him to incur  
the name of ridiculous, nor the want  
breed opinion of incourteous auste-  
rity. And as they take in the light  
where the ayre swimming along a  
pleasant place, may make the pro-  
spect more excellent: so we ought to  
inlet a Ieast into the body of more  
grauē reasonings, when the oppor-  
tunity and lucky meeting of circum-  
stances may make the delight more  
full. These Iestes are of special force in  
auoiding idle questions (many things  
being fit so to be answered, lest they  
might be thought worthy of a graue  
determinatiō) *vanitas proprie festini-  
das cedit*: they are more passable after

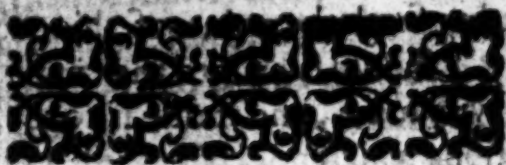
Eff 49. 11.

prouocation, & the apprehension of the wit appeareth greater, especially if the countenance be graue, and set, & if more may bee surmised then the bare letter doth expresse. All dishonest formes or vulgar basenesse must be eschewed: They must not note any true defect, and therefore with weake and small natures, not standing vpon the might and strength of their owne vertues, it is good to contraine many wordes, which may relish of a wittie pleasingnesse: For presently, men guilty thinke their state is touched, whereas another, who pretenteth to vertue, & out of well grounded confidence, feareth no disreputation would bee delighted. They must not concerne any mans present calamity: for men in misery are prone to suspect, and receive any thing as a contumely, by an impotency perswaded, that their misery is derided, and in mindes already troubled, new displeasures make



## *Of Discretion.*

make a deeper impression, then they  
do in such spirits as are free and void  
of passion.



### ESSAY. 12.

## *Of Discretion.*

**D**iscretion is the Gouvernesse of  
vertue, the rule of our beha-  
viour, the measure of our affections,  
the Mistresse of demeanure, that  
seasoning of our actions, which ma-  
keth them acceptable, teaching vs  
to be comely without wantonnesse,  
hand-some without curiosity, so-  
lemne without tediousnesse, learned  
without vaine-glory, friendly with-  
out factiousnesse, severe without  
disquiet, valiant without braving,

courteous with gravity, and benig-  
ne with Maiefty: and to conclude, it  
is the ballance, in which wee should  
weigh all our actions. But least in  
setting forth the points of this qua-  
lity, I should stray into the confines  
of wisdom, and intitle it to those  
actions which hold of an higher ver-  
tue, I will reſtraine it to ſuch indiffe-  
rent things, whoſe forme and quali-  
ty of uſage may appertaine either to  
vertue or vice: But in performing  
them, a man muſt be preciſe: for the  
vulgar ſort.

(*Qui ſuper titulis, & imaginibus*)  
not able to ſee into matters them-  
ſelves, will ever iudge of the ſub-  
ſtance by the circumſtances, and ac-  
cording to the out-ward ſemblance  
preoccupy conceites of the inward  
intentions: This is that which Cicero  
commandeth in great Fortunes: *non*  
*solum animis, ſed etiam oculis ſervire*  
*ciuitati*, and not to thinke him-  
ſelfe diſcharged, except hee accom-  
pany

## Of Discretion.

pany his actions with faire likeli-  
hoods. This modestie (if it bee not  
taken on for shew, nor affected and  
violent) is an externall composure,  
and decency of Customs, rising out  
of that inward moderatiō, by which  
al disordinate passions and irregular  
motions, are subiected to the rule of  
reason, and through which a man  
fulfilleth that *Decorum*, which by a  
sweete Harmonie and good accorde  
of fit time and place, addeth a sin-  
gular grace to all our actions: teach-  
ing vs to put a difference in persons,  
and which diuers natures doe treat  
diuersly: with familiars to be open  
hearted, with strangers suspitious,  
with cleare dealing men secure, with  
subtrill Companions warie, with  
pleasants delicate, with the learned  
reall, with the ambitious desirous of  
their greatnes, with the modest free  
from passions, with the interrested  
distrustful, to euill sparing in giuing  
trust; and by this applying to euery

*Essay. 12.*

mans humour, things difficult become facile, and matters of trouble loose their grievousnesse.

Some men are so incapable, that they make small things great, easie buisnesses impossible, and enterprise nothing, which through their peruerse grace is not difficultly accomplished, whose frowardnesse a man may compare to the vnskilfulnesse of some Chirurgions, who instead of healing, fester a wound, and in lieu of mitigation make the torments more grievously dangerous, whereas expert Leaches doe with gentle lenitiues redresse the malady before the Patient haue any feeling of pain. So men discreet hauing their spirits awaked to al circumstances manage matters with a more delicate deportment, and by certaine premised preparatiues so dispose the minde of the other agent, as it may bee apt to receiue any forme which they shal impose: And with the same art deale  
with

## *Of Discretion.*

with those, who by a crooked nature shew themselves insupportable, or transported with the fury of passions utter words full of disdain. Now men indewed with this vertue of easinesse, (as cunning Vaulters by a nimble sleight saue themselves from the impetuons assault of the aduersary) I thereby drawing their reasons from some vnexpected place, or by passing with a readinesse of apprehension to a more plausible subiect, or by sounding a far off with some extrauagant words, so follow their vnderstanding, that at length they condescend, vsing the same consideration, which good Players at ball haue, who not to suffer a rest, do not only stand attentiu to send it to their companion, but with like heed provide to retake it, by accommodating their person, & expecting it in the likeliest place: so they to auoide all hinderances do not only sute their owne words, but also giue fauo-

favorable constructions to the speeches of the other agent, by dissembling the discontentments which might arise: even as the Sunne doth not altogether moue with the highest Heauen, nor yet is mooued directly contrary, but fetching a compasse a little ouerthwart, maketh an oblique circle, and by variety of approaching & departing keepeth the world in good temperature: So *Osha* beeing not well established, and knowing that he must moderate that discipline, which might seeme to be exacted in such a case, in repressing a mutiny, imputeth the confusion & disturbances, to a tender and excessive affection of the Souldiers towards him, more zealous then considerate. *Nimia pietas vestra, &c.*

And thus he quieted those, who (being by the guilt of rebellion excluded from all hope of pardon) might according to the nature of man, (which hateth those whome it hath hurt)



## Of Discretion.

hurt) fall to desperation of recouering fauour, when desperation in such times of commotions might draw them to a seded resolution to keep themselves out of reach of correction. For if one play false, the best rule is, to seeme not to perceiue it, and if (if hee begin (as suspected) to cleere himselfe) to seeme neuer to haue doubted of his fidelity. *Qui enim se non putat satisfacere, amicus esse nullo modo potest.* Therefore *Agrippina* in *Tacitus* knowing her life attempted by *Nero*, knew well, that her only remedy was to take no notice of the treasons.

Neyther is it the part of a seruile fawning nature, to aunswere them with moderation, which vrgc out of passion, but rather a quiet temper grounded vpon a certayne and infallible confidence in vertue. A man must rule his affections, and make reason like another *Automedon* to direct them, thereby to collerate

## **Essay. 12.**

rate other mens defects, and make a vertuous resistance against pride, arrogance and other such vniust rebellions of passions.

Wemust vse the shield of mansuetude, which may mittigate the suddenesse and fury of anger, compose the inner powers of the minde, and conforme the appetite of reuenge to reason: for this affection not regulated by an higher power, maketh a man forgetfull of God and conscience, depriving the mind of the light of iudgement, distempering the humors of the body, and giuing them a prey to diuerse dangerous diseases.

**ESSAY.**

## ESSAY 13.

### *Of Speech.*

**O**Vr Language must be natural without affectation, honest, comely, significant, expressive, proper, voide of all feare & effeminate tearms. In speaking the rules are to vter our mind freely without dissembling: for words doubtful & obscure reserved in particular, bound to respect or feare, are arguments of a base mind and tokens of imbecility of spirit; To auoide in priuate discourses to take vp the chaire: for there is nothing more odious then to affect to be wise out of time, and learning tasteth not kindly to euery Pallet: To vse sometimes conceits of learning, as the embroderies, but in an hidden manner, like as apparell dooth represent the proportion, but not the

## Essay. 14.

barrennesse of our members. To point at Histories, without making any particular relation of the circumstances: to auoid comparisons, except they be restrained to a Metaphor, for otherwise they cannot bee *sine apparatu Rhetorico*, or som other vnseasonable insinuation: To auoid preposterousnes, for to know what is treated, is the mother of attention in the hearer. But generally it is the greatest wisdome rather to attend others, then to be an eloquent Marchant of selfe conceites, for men expert and practised, can out of a mans words deduce great consequences, and take light of matters of great importance.

ESSAY.

## ESSAY 14.

### *Of Wisedome.*

**I**F wee will knowe, what wisdome is, let ys laie aside the curious questions of Schoolemen, and such as are truly Nominals, and consider it in the frame of our Microcosm: where are two eyes signifying foresight with pondering vpon the likelihood of successe, two eares patiently to admit the counsell of others and not to be caried away with selfe complacence: one hart for perscuering in an vniform resolution, & two hands for quicke dispatching, and putting it in execution. And this is wisdome, wherof there cannot bee deuised a more expresseiue Hieroglyphicke, then the composition of our bodies.

This heauenly gift, begetting in  
our

*Essay. 14.*

our harts a secret & inuisible light,  
hath som resemblance to the eies of  
some couragious wild beasts, which  
in the morning, when euery silly  
creature maketh vse of the sight, re-  
pose themselues: but in the darke  
night see clearest, and then addresse  
themselues to prey: So wisdom in  
difficult affaires, such as are beyond  
the straine and leuell of a common  
discourse, behaueh her selfe excel-  
lently: but triuiall matters with a  
certain despisingnesse neglecteth or  
handleth them vnder expectation,  
as a common iudgement would do.  
Therefore men of a deep insight and  
great vnderstanding, hauing neither  
degree nor riches, nor authorities, co-  
quall to their sufficiencie of things  
of small moment, as disproportion-  
ated to their vertue, behaue them-  
selues sometime inconsiderately care-  
lesse: but admitted to the sweigh-  
ing of great matters, vunexpectedly  
come to seuale in deedes and con-  
ceits,



## Of Wisdome.

ceites, that greatnesse and Maiesty which by the basenesse of their fortune was oppressed and kept vnder. *Excitantur enim ad meliora magnitudine rerum*, and they loue to bee employed in that which might be, *rare, excellent singular, and above the ordinary capacity.*

The first part of wisdome, is deliberation, in which wee must resolve neither with hast nor affection, the one not giuing time enough to discusse those things which ought to be considered, the other so occupying the minde, that no thought creepe in which doth not in all regards conforme it selfe to giue succorance to that passion: we must promise our selues nothing before our conceptions are by great presumptions assured of successe. For the seruency of hope maketh men somewhat more recklesly negligent, in so much that when they are disappointed, they are as impatiently  
**G**rieved,

*Essay. 14*

griued; as if they had false from  
an essential felicity, like novice  
Marchantes, who fore-counting  
great gaires, and sayling of their  
fresh expectation, are suddenly im-  
barked in that vnrecoverable mis-  
chiefe of debt.

In counsell it is the greatest ex-  
cellency (and in many natures rather  
to be wished then hoped for) to pre-  
ferre the opportunity of time before  
the suggestion of disdain, to mode-  
rate desires according to the ad-  
verse, or prosperous winds of occa-  
sion, to serue time and not obstina-  
ly wrestle with foule weather, but  
like an experienced Pilote put into  
some harbor til the cleared sky pro-  
mise a more secure passage. But wee  
must not betake our selues to those  
remedies, which doe rather declare  
the greatnesse of danger, then re-  
dresse the inconueniences, neither  
must we thinke in great deliberati-  
ons to auoid all inconueniences: for  
if

## Of wisdom.

It is impossible that in this world one thing be ingendred without the corruption of another, and euery commodity is vnfortunately annexed to some discommodity. But let vs remember.

*Rade volte aduie, che ad alte imprese  
Fortuna ingiuriosa non contrasti.*

Slow counsels are fit rather to preserve then encrease a state, speedy and quick doe rather encrease then preserve : *Agendo, audendo querat Romana crenis*. But in cases of exigency, the worst course is to be gouerned by middle counsels, neither to bee cautious sufficiently in providing, nor earnest enough in executing.

But as mines if they bee secretly made produce wonderfull effects, otherwise endamage more then they auale, so counsels if they bee wrapped vp in silence, are very fortunate.

ly powerfull in ciuill actions, but diuulgated loose their force, when the other party hath time to frustrate their ends.

The way to keepe a thing private is to acquaint no bodie with it: Those things which are known only to our selues, cannot be common, those things which are imparted to another, cannot be secret. No man but hath some friend, whose fidelity hee holdeth so assured, that hee may safely entrust him with his nearest touching secret, and he presently wil with equal confidence to another disclose, til at length it be generally knowne.

And how can a man exact that faith in another, which he hath violated in himselfe? or how require silence when hee hath not performed it? or what indiscretion is it by opening to another, to enter a voluntary temerity, and to thus awed, least wee discontent him? But in

## Of Wisdome.

committing any secrets to another, we must imitate those, who in trying a new vessel, first prooue it with water, before they trust it with Wine.

There is nothing more contrary to this quality, then the passion of anger, which a man ought especially to moderate, by emptying ouer his affections, and triumphing in commanding himselfe to forgiue in such sort, that it break not out into words, specially against those, who stand able to iustifie themselves in the full of reputation: Those men, (which as *Cosmo* said) eary their heart in their mouth, are rather to be pitied then feared, their threatnings seruing for no other end, then to arme him that is threatned.

The chiefest rules of Wisdome are these: To prouide against the beginnings of euill: for disorders at the first little, gather strength in tract of time, euen as insensible vapours

bring forth horrible tempests: But when the evill doth exceed power of resistance, it is best by timing and discreet wayting to expect opportunity, for things in time receive contrary revolutions, and conclude cleane different from their first appearance and likely hood.

To continue in action and managing of matters: for new businesses arise out of the former, both by reason of the coherency and way, that one open to another, and also by the authority which is regained by being engaged in the handling of them. *Caesar* at his first rising into great expectation, would not suffer any matters of moment to passe at *Rome*, without his participation and notice, insomuch that even no conspiracy or matter of innovation could happen but he was an agent: For he was a party in the combination of *Crassus* and his companies, of *Cassius* *Piso* and *Calpurnius*. But to be interested



## Of Wisdome.

sed in many businesses of consequence at one time, doth deuide a man, and cause him to make imperfect offers, and reuerse things before they be perfected.

To accompany all actions with a good colour, for many (*quibus magnos viros per ambitionem asstimare mos est*) not able to see into things themselves, wil make iudgement by the circumstances.

To auoide suddaine changes: for that doth hold of violence, and violence doth seldome sort to any prosperous ends.

To prefer the present State, before innouations, and that which is *in turbido*: for this is nothing else but to account rather of certainty, then incertainty, rather of things easie and safe, then magnificent and dangerous.

Not to giue sufferance to the first wrong: for that breedeth proper derogation: Such vnworthy

*Essay. 14.*

collerations inspire the partie with boldnesse, and are (as it were) pul-  
lies to drawe on iniuries: but to call  
things into correction, preserveth  
authority.

*a* To dissemble according to the  
apparances & fashions of the time:  
*Tiberius* gloried in nothing so much  
as his cunning in cloaking his pur-  
poses with faire pretences, and go-  
ing inuisibly, in which surely he was  
excellent.

To settle more assurance in him  
that expecteth the in him who hath  
receiued a benefite: for by speeding  
in suites, men become slack waiters,  
when hope of honour and gaine (the  
only soueraigne meane to conserue  
men in due deuotion) shall bee sa-  
tisfied.

To bee wisely diffident, and put  
on a iudiciall distrust: Put on I say  
because there is nothing lesse fami-  
liar and easie to honest men then to  
suspect: for they think the strength  
of

## *Of Wisedome.*

of vertue in another, whereof they finde the foundation in themselves: for it is very true, that men most fairly conditioned, are of the first impression, and apt to bee trained into errors: but such as are practised in wickednes, go alway armed against the like. To suspect causelessly instead of imagined wrong, returneth an effectuall iniury, and many haue inuited their friends to deceiue them, while too iniuriously their fidelitie is called in question.

To despise iniuries of honour nobly, and with an highnesse of mind: for contumelies not regarded vanish of themselves into obliuion, but repined at, argue a guilty conscience. Men enuious (desiring to perish rather with their owne vices, then be saued by anothers vertue) are readie to diminish the reputation, of a more worthier.

But the best answer to their slanders, is to answer nothing,  
and

• *Essay. 14.*

and so to steward the effects of re-  
uenge, as if the aduersary were ra-  
ther to be contemptuously pittied,  
then reckoned of : or rather a man  
must endeavour by doing well, to au-  
thorise an ill opinion of them. For  
as enuy is the shaddowe of vertue :  
So when vertue shall come to that  
perfection, as to reueale it selfe to  
the world, then like the verticall  
Sunne it abateth all shaddowes,  
which the low creeping obiections  
of detraction can stirre. In suffering  
things of this qualitie is shewed  
the greatest force and magnanimity  
and a sure confidence in vertue. Let  
vs remember, that an honest and  
wise man can no way bee dishono-  
red: that it is an excellent and di-  
uine commendation: *Ab and tio-  
ne mala non timebat.*

To qualifie enny (which vndoub-  
tedly will arise in men of no action,  
in sufficiency being very apprehen-  
sive) the best course is to attribute  
the

### *Of wisdom.*

the successes rather to felicitie then vertue. Therefore *Sylla* to suppress any such humours, as preiudicial to his rising and greatnes, referred the honour of his exploits to the speciall grace of Fortune, and the better to encrease that opinion oftentimes auerred, that enterprises hazarded according to the sodaine occasion, better prospered with him, then those which by good aduise hee determined of.

Enuie also hath no force when it appeareth, that the actions are directed rather to vertue, then to fame. Great Fortunes hauing atchieued matters worthy themselves, must not ambitiously seeke ceremonies, nor abuse the prosperous ends to vanity of speech: but by auoiding popular meetings, by moderating the rumour of desert, they must begin,

*— Otium & somnum loqui,*

and

**Essay. 14.**

and excuse themselves from entering  
into any actions of the like qualitie,  
but in such sort, that neither through  
the motion of worldly appetite and  
ambition, they seek to embrace more  
then is convenient, nor through too  
many suspicions, and too much  
incredulitie, they deprive  
themselves of great  
occasions.

of



ESSAY, 15.

*Of Reputation.*

**R**eputation is a common conceit of extraordinary vertue acquired not by the multitude, but by greatnesse of acts, by so stewarding a mans seasonable endeauours, as that which is done may be apprehended, as rare, singular, great, without paragon, admirable. Small vertues, and of ordinary excellency winne both trust and loue: for the vnderstanding present

Essay. 15.

presently finding in them a degree of worthinesse, mooueth the will to embrace them : but great vertues drawing with them a certaine diuine competency and greates, so amuse the intellectuall part in contemplation of their valew, that the affection of loue is excluded, as not able to honor, when the mind is neuer satisfied in admiring.

Those actions doe chiefly settle this impression, which proceed from a discreet despising of those things, which the common sence of worldlings apprehendeth to be desired : as to reſtaine from thoſe luſtfull affections, into which humane imbecility is prone, to ſeduce the moſt reſtrained imagination, or to reſolve againſt death, and rather encounter the moſt hideous formes of daunger, then overcome by any vniuſt advantages: or by commanding over all all private intereſts, by forgetting all naturall affections, when they

## Of wisdom.

they stand not with an higher vertue: So *Scipio* by offering no dishonour or violence to that faire damsell *Allucins* his Spouse: So *Fabritius* in returning the traiterous Physician to his deserued punishment: So *Manlius* by performing exemplaric iustice vpon his sole sonne, obtained this esteeme, and a loue mixed with authority.

Surely, that action imported a wonderfull temper of minde, and an absololute victory of those passions which in such cases would ouerswey the best grounded resolution: For euen *Aeneas* himselfe, in whom magnanimity doth shine through all misty fearefulnesse, hauing with a secure brauery of mind, passed multitudes of his enemies, yet when hee hath taken charge of his father and his son *Iulius*, hee findeth himselfe disarmed of that vertuous indifferencie, fearing their feare, quaking at their shadow:

Et

*Essay. 15.*

*--Et pariter comitique, onerique timentem.*

To confirme our mindes in this despisingnesse, wee must direct our course to attayne the Hauen, and quiet of a good conscience, accounting all other thinges in no other proportion, then as the windes and tempests, which would remoue vs from this determination, by forcing vs with a weake dispayre, and coward hating of life, to retyre into the harbour of idlenesse: wee must remember to accustome our thoughts to expectation of troubles, to receiue them with no perturbation, to rule ouer Fortune, to thinke her nothing, if humane ignorance and imbecillitie did not defie her, if our vaine ambitions and disorderly concupiscences did not arme her in that usurpation of reasons Seignory: wee must seeke true felicity in the centre  
of

## *Of Reputation.*

of the minde, and not in the circumference of worldly things, which are subiect to continual reuolution: for that is to giue our selues a prey to those alterations, which follow the interchange of faire and contrary accidents: wee must know, that as wee are compounded of an heavenly and earthy substance, so our care must be to provide for the good of the better part, and for the bodie but in a lower degree, as the instrument of the soule. And as we must not contemne in this life, fame, honour, wealth, friends, and those things, which in the deceiueable style of appetite are called goods, and attributed to fortune, but by honest meanes endeaour their fruition, as thinges good or bad, according to the vse: so we must not delight in them for them-selues, nor bee troubled in suffering their priuation, nor out of an humour of confidence prouoke miseries: *Asca-*

H

*nins*

Essay. 15.

nus in a youthfull brauery.

*Optat aprum, aut fuluum descendere  
monte leonem.*

But that desire proceedeth from a  
not wel guided (but yet excusable)  
heate of vnripe ycares : Wee per-  
forme our deuoures, if void of feare  
(the only thing to be feared) we so  
tolerate vnauidable mischieses,  
that they neither disturbe reason,  
nor driue the minde to vnrest: other-  
wise as a scauer doth hinder the ope-  
rations of the body, so sorrow spring-  
ing from these chances, (if it bee  
not moderated) disquieteth reason,  
admitteth many corrupt and dis-  
dainfull inclinations, subiecteth the  
mind to infinite defections, and stai-  
eth the execution of great and wor-  
thy actions.

This aptnesse of resolution, or of  
disposing a mans inward self, is wai-  
ted on with valour and wisdom,  
which



## *Of Reputation,*

which are the two most principall pillars of Reputation, not onely in respect of their coherency in the same manner, as the eye & the hand: but because they rather come of a benefit of nature, then intent and choice (the one proceeding from a readinesse of wit, the other from a preience and courage of minde) drawing with them in a kind of dependency these heroycall vertues, magnanimity, patronage of iustice against all oppressions and magnificence. Other vertues of meeknesse, humanity and courtesie, in ministering to the wants of men, in preferring them to places of honour, in redeeming the offender from the rigour of the law, doe stirre affection: but these vertues, if the Commonweale bee a party in enioying them win admiration. The actions which chiefly reueale them, are victories in the field beyond expectation, surprisings of Cities, erections of state-

*Essay. 15.*

ly houses for common vses, graue  
and fortunate counsailling the State,  
discreete discharging of Embassa-  
ges.

To the obtrayning this opin<sup>ion</sup>,  
must concur two other helping cau-  
ses, as specially remarkable in great  
Fortunes: first Nobility, for if the  
auncestors were men of valour, and  
eminency in vertue, the vulgar sort  
(out of a true loue to men of desert)  
will pre-occupy the same conceite  
of their issue. Secondly conuersati-  
on, which if it bee among men wor-  
thy, presently argueth a likenesse in  
manners, to the people, which seeth  
nothing but apparances, and makeith  
iudgement by that which is subiect  
to sight, thinking a man so qualified  
as those with whome he doth enfel-  
lowship.

But these reasons, although they  
ate of great consequence, yet are  
doubtfull, and the expectation is  
weakely grounded vpon opinion  
onely

## *Of Reputation.*

onely, which presently changeth, except it be establiſhed by ſome ouer-  
action, which may be worthy them-  
ſelves both for difficulcie of accom-  
pliſhing and ſucceſſefull end.

Thoſe things which are done  
in youth, ( becauſe this age is not  
enely enuied, but alſo fauoured )  
are of great moment in giuing liſe to  
the opinion of the world, and in  
nouriſhing ſuch preſumptions, as  
confirmed by ſome great and noble  
exploite, may ſuddenly growe into  
this actuall reputation. Therefore  
in Rome the young men of greateſt  
hope did either preferre ſome lawe  
in behalfe of the people, or put law-  
breakers in ſute, ( a thing as *Plutarch*  
ſayth, pleaſing the people as much  
as to ſee an table courſe of a dogge  
at an Hare ) or which is more com-  
mendable, defended the innocency  
of the oppreſſed againſt the iniuri-  
ous intreaties of the powerable and  
great ones, ( as *Ciceroes* patronizing of

*Roscius* at so varripe yeares, and with such liberty of speech against the potency of prowd *Sylla*, was the first stepp to the possibility of his greatness. Or did some thing which might mooue talke, and become *Fabula vulga* through the whole City as *Marius* his rescue of his Father from the Tribunes, or *Cesars* dealing in compounding the ciuile dissentions of *Pompey* and *Crassus*, by shewing them, that their mutual depressions serued for nothing, but to encrease the authority of their enemies, and arme a third with that credit, which now remained, inuiolable in themselves.

This action argued a witte farre ouer-going the greenenesse of his age, and was the first moouer of the peoples affection towards him: for what is more honourable then to treat, in according two so noble personages, which had liued so long in seperation. But because an opinion

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nion thus obtained must bee fed by the like meanes, or else vanissheth as soone as it appeares to the world: This commendation must bee accounted in no other measure, but as an encouragement to doe better, or as the ayre, which maketh mē grow yp in vertue, and quickneth the appetite to enterprisc things of high deseruing praise.

For preteruiag Reputation is required Religion, and (that concurrence of diuine vertue) felicity: whe the opiniō of being religious is established, it seemeth that al other vertues must follow of necessity, and by it all suspitions of any vilety, or lacke of vertue are silenced. But here wee must auoid two rockes, superstition, and dissimulation: In the one is small wisdom, because these bug-beares, and Chimeraes of opinion, render a man vncapable of weighty matters, idle, contemptuous, vainely fearful, simple and open

*Essay. 15.*

to bee practised vpon by all deceit-  
fulnes In the other appeareth great  
craft, and when zeale is put on, as  
a per-text to palliate wickednesse, it  
bringeth such Nullifidians to bee o-  
dious, suspected and abhorred by the  
common consent of men: and there-  
fore it is best to bee sociall in shew,  
but precise in effect: to keepe God  
sparingly in our mouth, but aboun-  
dantly in our heart.

The workes which chiefly beeto-  
ken a man religious, are, to appre-  
hend, to aduance the Ministry, to  
provide for those, who doe not in  
plausible formes preach themselues,  
but despising such a pompous and  
malepert manner, breath grace and  
truth: to furnish them with suffici-  
ent livings, because there is nothing  
which more impaireth the reuerence  
due to that profession, then needy-  
nesse.

Concerning felicity, some men  
are borne vnder a propitious as-  
pect



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pect of Heauen, or rather fauoured with diuine grace, which guideth their actions vnder a continuall protection of good lucke. These men bringing their designs to prosperous issues, are thought of a iudgement and valour equall for the accomplishment of the like, and as the Comedian saith,

--*Exinde ens sapere omnes dici-*  
*mus.*

While not considering the weaknesse and imperfections of their counsels, wee make iudgement by the event.

The chiefe Rules to maintaine Reputation are these: To haue more deedes then words, rather doing things worthy to bee spoken, then speaking things worthy to bee done: To auoide words of yaunting or brauerie, and in relations to bee reserved in selfe commendations:

tions : For fame by suppressing is augmented, and praise in this resembleth a quaint Dame, which followeth those that despise her, and flyeth those that follow her : To acknowledge no dependencie, for that is to confesse vncapablenesse and defects : To be vniforme in life and actions, constant'y maintaining word and promise : To attempt things within power, and feasible : For easily to giue ouer enterprises, implyeth either small iudgement in assaying, or a little minde in not prosecuting : To neglect sma'l actions after the accomplishment of great : for to a personage of valour there is not a more necessary thing, then to knowe the height of his greatnes. *Marius* in not contenting himselfe with the reputation gotten in the *Cimbrian* war diminshed it, by entring into other actions : Not to bee discountenanced in missing any place, or office : for sometime, such

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such falling in futes augmenteth this esteeme: We may reade of *Lamius* in *Tacitus* a Senator of birth & quality, who suing to bee gouernor of *Siria*, was repelled: *As non promissa prouincia dignationem addiderat*. The cause was, because the people which is a beholder of the Princes actions, maketh ouer-bolde interpretations of them, and ambitiously comparing men of merite, when they find defect vnacknowledged, presently with presumptuous rashnesse conclude the defect in the Prince, & by making it the subiect of their conference, encrease his esteeme that was disapointed: for this reason *Cato* said, That he had rather that the people should enquire why hee had no Statue erected to his memorie, then why he had.

And againe, I obserue, that at the solemnizing of *Julias* funerals, among the images of twenty noble houses, were left out that of *Cassius*,

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*Cassius*, her husband, and *Brutus* her brother, to the intent, to extinguish their memory: but yet they did shine aboue all the rest for this only, because their images were not represented.

Moreover, things must bee intrusted to men responsall and sufficient: To vse base and vnablen men for instruments in executions of weight; doth impair their credit. No office must be vndertaken with anie extraordinarie opinion: For the not answering such conceits, (men desiring things impossible) doth in time breed infamy.

This Reputation once obtained, worketh a louing feare in the people, (loue stirring their affection and feare mingling it with authoritie:) Loue is the most forcible of all our passions, and as the principal giueth vigour and motion to the rest: but it is a thing doubtfull and deceivable, in respect of the imperfection

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tion of men: for no man can de-  
meane-himselfe with such circum-  
spection, that hee can satisfie and  
please all, because mens minds are  
by nature insatiable, vpon euerie  
accident changing opinion, incon-  
stant, murmuring for trifling re-  
gards, alway disliking the present,  
and preferring things of expectati-  
on and hope, before certainty and  
quietnesse, insomuch that one fa-  
uour, if it bee not equally giuen to  
all, but in anie greater proportion  
measured to one particular, cleane  
cannelleth the memory of fore-pas-  
sed good turnes: Such is the na-  
ture of man, that late benefits are  
cleane lost, if there be not an hope  
to receiue more, and although the  
obligations bee neuer so great, yet  
one thing denyed, doth solely pos-  
sesse the memory, and all our  
fauours are drowned in forgetful-  
nesse.

Feare

*Essay. 15.*

Feare is a more certaine ground then loue for maintaining authoritie, because loue is the power of the louer, feare in him, that maketh himselfe feared: But yet feare procureth hatred, which although it be dissembled so long as it is vnable to shake off obedience, yet when a greater force shall vntie that knot, it will burst out into open contesting.

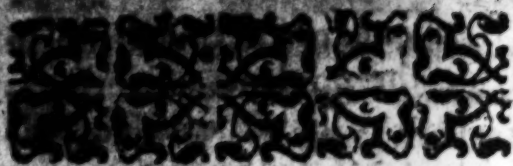
Now because men easily bring themselves into contempt, men terrible and austere incurre hatred, there is another middle qualitie, which I may eyther call a louing feare, or a reuerencing loue following Reputation.

This is a conseruer of that obedience and authority, in which men of great quality ought to retaine the multitude: for as the Elements, which otherwise stand at defiance, are by the heauenly Spheres conformed into well ruled motions, with-



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out violence or enforcement, onely  
obeying the noblenes of their na-  
ture: so men shew themselves wil-  
ling to be directed by those, who  
præcede, and are ennobled  
by an eminency of  
vertue.



ESSAY. 16.

*Of Liberalitie.*



Some receiue and entertaine favorites with kind gestures only, vnmeasurable in promises, but spare in ministering to wants, whom I may fitly compare to some fruites, which by a luscious smell and delightful colour inuite a man to eat, but prooue vnsauourie and distastefull.

They that are the dispensers of Gods temporall graces, must apply themselves to find out me of an honest

## Of Liberality.

and exemplary life, and to acknowledge their desert, *Ut non sit tantum ex conscientia merces*. They are the second causes, which by giving life and entertainment to vertue, must so dispose and prepare men of honest demeanure, as they may be fit to receive any form of honour or place, which (the first mover of the Common-weale) the Prince shall bestow vpon them: It is a false title to be the fosterer of desert, and the countenance of those, who through modesty are ready to retire from recitaling themselves in doing their countrey good.

The rewards of goodnesse or vice frame men accordingly: few are of so iudiciall a wit, as they measure vertue for the inner peace and contentment, and not according to successe: others seeing the guerdon due to merit, abused in maintaining wickednesse, thinke to obtaine by the same means, and fashion themselves

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accordingly, and when euill men receive fauour and place, ( besides the injury done to vertue ) *Hand facile quisquam grauita bonus est* : Liberality thus employed in favoring good wits, in nourishing arts, in quickning those lifefull feedes of goodnesse, in inuolting men to surpasse themselves, is the only vertue which overcometh enuy, and breedeth regard even in our enemies : for men learned once endeared by any obligation, as the heads and over-rulers of the common opinion of the world, binde all other men to reuerence their patron, and by sweete commemoration of receiued benefits win them to patterne themselves to their courses, as the onely hopefull ends to rise by.

This vertue must bee naturall, and amongst those things which cannot be imputed to election, & exercised with delight to doe good when it is encouraged by a grateful returne of hoped

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hoped gain, it is nothing but a base  
kind of counterchange and mar-  
chandizing.

It resembleth the divine nature,  
which communiceth to all, and  
expecteth no future advantage and  
recompence. The use of this vertue is  
twofold, when a man findeth the re-  
turne of thankfulness, yet *Liberality*  
*non elationem ingratius debet facit:*  
it is more painful when it findeth the  
repayment of ingratitude.

Discretion must gouerne this ver-  
tue, rather than the graces, which  
are giuen to will. These whores:  
Followers ought to her counte-  
nanced both in their owne suites,  
and also in the requests of their fa-  
miliar: fonde apparel, at first child,  
receiuing heate from vs, conserueth  
our bodies with the heate we haue  
giuen in, so then ministers or attendants  
of a great state, beeing advanced by  
their patron, increase his reputation  
and powerableness. But they must

not be ouer importune, or vrge oftener then is conuenient : For so they become like the Iuy, which by an ouer-hard embracing hindereth the growing of the oake. It is good also to bee reserved in giuing to those, who quicke sighted in spying secret dislikes, will make vse of such occasions, and by multiplying suspitions, winde themselves into fauour, by working a more worthier into disgrace.

These men know no other habits but auarice, selfe-seeking contempt of others, and an high esteeme of their owne vnworthinesse. It is a difficult thing to sound their hollow dispositions and cauterized conscience, but the best notes to know them by are these: they haue no conformity with themselves, now commending and discommending the same thing, taking or putting of person, as the time or place shal require: they neuer stand well



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well affected with men of their own  
rank or society, but if they love a-  
ny, they must be Great men, It is an  
infallible signe of a crooked nature  
(as Cicero saith) to seeme affected to  
none but to Prætors,!

**FINIS.**